

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 09274 01 OF 02 010132Z

ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

AID-05 HA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 EB-08 IO-14

/114 W

-----063398 010151Z /70

R 291945Z SEP 78

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4047

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 9274

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

E.O. 111652: N/A

TAGS: PEPR PINT ECON VE

SUBJECT: THIS WEEK IN VENEZUELA

REF: CARACAS 9024 (B) CARACAS 8758

SUMMARY: GOV REACTION TO NICARAGUAN SITUATION. 1978 BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT TO BE \$1.5 BILLION. THE CARMONA CASE. READING THE POLLS - MUCH DEPENDS ON THE QUESTION. THE CAMPAIGN - ARRIA HAS AN AD CLIPPED. CUBANS ATTRIBUTE CRASH TO DC-3 TO ORLANDO BOSCH. END SUMMARY.

1. GOV REACTION TO NICARAGUA SITUATION. AFTER VENEZUELA'S INITIATIVE ON NICARAGUA WAS FRUSTRATED IN THE OAS, PRESIDENT PEREZ FACED RISING CRITICISM OF HIS NICARAGUAN POLICY FROM OPPOSITION PARTY POLITICIANS. COPEI PARTY LEADERS, WHO HAD BEGUN TO SNIPE AT PEREZ THE WEEK BEFORE, POURED ON THE CRITICISM THIS WEEK. EX-PRESIDENT RAFAEL CALDERA CALLED THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 09274 01 OF 02 010132Z

GOV'S POLICY "INCOHERENT" AND CAUTIONED PEREZ AGAINST TAKING THE ISSUE TO THE UN. COPEI SENATOR GODOFREDO GONZALEZ CHARGED PEREZ WITH SUPPORTING THE SOMOZA REGIME WITH A \$283 MILLION DOLLAR LOAN MADE TO THE GON IN 1974. COPEI SECRETARY GENERAL PEDRO PABLO AGUILAR ACCUSED THE GOV OF "SLOPPY DIPLOMACY," WHILE FORMER VICE FOREIGN MINISTER JOSE ALBERTO VELASCO CHARGED GOV DIPLOMACY IN THE OAS WAS CHARACTERIZED BY

"IMPROVISATION."

IN RESPONSE, PEREZ, AS WELL AS INFORMATION MINISTER CELESTINO ARMAS, AD PRESIDENT GONZALO BARRIOS AND MINISTER OF THE PRESIDENCY CARMELO LAURIA ALL TOOK TO THE PRESS TO DEFEND THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE NICARAGUAN CRISIS. BY WEEK'S END, PEREZ MANAGED TO REFOCUS PRESS ATTENTION ON HIS EFFORT TO PRESS FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTION AGAINST THE SOMOZA REGIME BY SENDING A LETTER (CO-AUTHORED BY PRESIDENT CESAR TURBAY OF COLOMBIA) TO THE UN ON NIACARAGUA. PEREZ, HOWEVER, HAS SUBSEQUENTLY WAFFLED ON HIS EARLIER ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WOULD TAKE THE NICARAGUAN PROBLEM BEFORE THE UN, DUE UNDOUBTEDLY TO HEAVY CRITICISM FROM COPEI AND A WEEK'S TIME TO REFLECT ON HIS DECISION.

2. 1978 BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT TO BE \$1.5 BILLION DOLLARS. MINISTER OF FINANCE SILVA LUONGO RESPONDING TO REPORTERS LAST WEEK, ANNOUNCED THAT VENEZUELA COULD HAVE A BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT OF \$1.5 BILLION (\$156 MILLION IN 1977). THE MINISTER PREDICTED THAT, DUE TO ECONOMIC GROWTH AND A CHANGE IN IMPORT POLICY, THE DEFICIT SHOULD BE CONSIDERABLY LESS BY 1980 AND THAT BY 1981 VENEZUELA SHOULD AGAIN ENJOY A PAYMENTS SURPLUS. SILVA LUONGO ATTRIBUTED THIS YEAR'S DEFICIT TO NEEDED CAPITAL IMPORTS, AND ALSO STRESSED THAT THE RATE OF IMPORTS HAS EASED THIS YEAR FROM THE 33 PERCENT INCREASE IN 1977.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CARACA 09274 01 OF 02 010132Z

3. THE CARMONA CASE - JUDE CONSIDERS FORMAL CHANGES AGAINST FORMER POLICE CHIEF WHO IS STRIPPED OF REMAINING OFFICIAL TIES. THE INVESTIGATING JUDGE LOOKING INTO THE DEATH OF LAWYER RAMON CARMONA VASQUEZ, THIS WEEK OFFICIALLY ASKED THE FISCAL GENERAL'S OFFICE TO UNDERTAKE AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FORMER CHIEF OF THE TEHCNICAL JUDICIAL POLICE (PTJ) MOLINA GASPERI'S ACTIONS IN ALLOWING TWO KEY WITNESSES (SEE CARACAS 8758) TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY DESPITE A JUDICIAL ORDER PRHOBITING THEIR DEPARTURE. IN ADDITION, MOLINA GASPERI, WAS OFFICIALLY FIRED SPET. 27 FROM THE PTJ. COMMENT: THE CARMONA CASE CONTINUES TO RECEIVE ALMOST UNPRECEDENTED PUBLICITY. THE FIRST JUDGE CHRAGED WITH OVERSEEING THE CASE IS NOW UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR HAVING FLOWN OFF TO ARUBA RATHER THAN BEGINNING HIS INVESTIGATION. IT TURNS OUT HE IS A COLLEGE CHUM OF MOLINA GASPERI'S. THE GOV IS HIGHLY SENSITIVE TO THIS CASE, SINCE THE PRESS CLAIMS THERE IS EVIDENCE OF PTJ COMPLICITY IN CARMONA'S MURDER. IN ADDITION, MILINA GASPERI IS CLOSE TO PEREZ ADMINISTRATION FIGURES AND SHOULD THE INVESTIGATION INCRIMINATE HIM, IT WOULD REFLECT MOST UNFAVORABLY ON THE ADMINISTRATION.

4. READING THE POLLS - MUCH DEPENDS ON THE QUESTIONS.
LAST WEEK'S WEEKA REPORTED THAT THE LATEST DATOS POLL SHOWED
PINERUA WITH A SMALL BUT POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT LEAD, 32-31
PERCENT OVER HERRERA IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION "IF THE
ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY, FOR WHOM WOULD YOU VOTE?" FURTHER
INFORMATION MADE PUBLIC THIS WEEK ABOUT THE SAME DATOS POLL
(TAKEN NATIONALLY END OF AUGUST-EARLY SEPTEMBER) REVEALED
SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS PHRASED IN A
SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT MANNER. FOR EXAMPLE: "WHO DO YOU THINK
WOULD DO THE BEST JOB AS PRESIDENT?"--PINERUA 28 PERCENT,
HERRERA 31 PERCENT; "AMONG THE TWO TOP CONTENDERS, WHO COULD
BEST GOVERN THE COUNTRY?"--PINERUA 32 PERCENT, HERRERA 35
PERCENT. COMMENT: THE EMBASSY IS PREPARING A FURTHER REPORT
ON THE CAMPAIGN WHICH WILL DISCUSS IN GREATER DETAIL THE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 CARACA 09274 01 OF 02 010132Z

RESULTS ON THE DATOS POLL. HOWEVER, THIS NEW INFORMATION
ABOUT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS PROVIDES AN INTERESTING INSIGHT INTO
HOW THE VENEZUELAN VOTER PERCEIVES THE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE TWO MAJOR CANDIDATES, I.E., HERRERA IS SEEN TO BE MORE
QUALIFIED (DOING A BETTER JOB), AND POSSIBLY ALSO MORE ABLE
TO INSPIRE LEADERSHIP (GOVERNING THE COUNTRY BETTER), BUT
PINERUA LEADS NATIONALLY, AND IN FACT, IN BOTH CARACAS AND
MARACAIBO, BY APPRECIABLE MARGINS, ACCORDING TO THE POLL.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CARACA 09274 02 OF 02 010132Z
ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
AID-05 HA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 EB-08 IO-14
/114 W

-----063404 010152Z /70

R 291945Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4048
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 CARACAS 9274

5. THE CAMPAIGN- ARRIA HAS AN AD CLIPPED. THE SUPREME ELECTORAL COUNCIL (THE ELECTION WATCHDOG) BANNED ONE OF DIEGO ARRIA'S ADS IN WHICH ARRIA NOTES THAT HIS COMMON CAUSE'S OFFICIAL COLORS (RED,BLUE AND BEIGE) ARE SIMILAR TO THAT NATIONAL COLORS,AND CALLS ON THE ELECTORS TO VOTE FOR THE NATIONAL COLORS. THE AD-COPEI DEBATE THIS WEEK CENTERED ON NICARAGUA.

6. CUBANS ATTRIBUTE CRASH OF DC-3 TO ORLANDO BOSCH. THE CARACAS PRESS CARRIED A SEPTEMBER 27 STORY DATED HAVANA REPORTING THAT A US REGISTERED DC-3 BLEW UP IN THE AIR ON SEPTEMBER 21 ON A FLIGHT FROM FLORIDA TO CUBA. THE STORY STATED THAT AN ANTI-CASTRO GROUP CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EXPLOSION WHICH KILLED FOUR AMERICANS.THE STORY MADE DIRECT REFERENCE TO ORLANDO BOSCH,NOTING THAT OBSERVERS WERE TYING THE CRASH OF THE DC-3 TO THE OCTOBER 1976 EXPLOSION OF A CUBANA AIRLINER NEAR BARBADOS FOR WHICH BOSCH AND THREE VENEZUEL-

ANS ARE BEING TRIED IN CARACAS. COMMENT: AS REPORTED CARACAS 8758, THE COURT APPEARANCE WAS POSTPONED IN MID-AUGUST AND SUBSEQUENTLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CARACA 09274 02 OF 02 010132Z

BOSCH WAS TAKEN ILL. THEN EARLY LAST WEEK IT APPEARED LIKELY THAT THE GOV WAS FINALLY GOING TO FORMALLY CHARGE BOSCH IN COURT. BUT THE COURT APPEARANCE WAS THEN POSTPONED ONCE AGAIN. THIS LATEST INCIDENT GENERATED FURTHER PUBLICITY ABOUT BOSCH AND OTHER ANTI-CASTRO FANATICS AND CONVEIVABLY COULD STRENGTHEN THE RESOLVE OF THOSE IN THE GOV WHO WOULD BELIEVE IT BEST TO SOCK IT TO BOSCH. IT REMAINS HIGHLY UNLIKELY, HOWEVER,THAT THE GOV WILL REACH A VERDICT IN THE CASE PRIOR TO THE DECEMBER ELECTIONS. OTHER REPORTING THIS WEEK INCLUDED:

PRESIDENTIAL NON-FUEL MINERALS POLICY REVIEW (CARACAS 9101)

QUADRILATERAL PETROLEUM ARRANGEMENT (CARACAS 9210)

PRESIDENT PEREZ AND PRESIDENT TURBAY OF COLOMBIA SEND JOINT LETTER TO UN ON NICARAGUA (CARACAS 9203)

PEREZ COMMENTS ON OAS "FAILURE"AND NICARAGUA SITUATION (CARACAS 09098)

COPEI PARTY CONTINUES CRITICISM OF PEREZ OVER NICARAGUA (CARACAS 9099)

THREE VENEZUELAN NAVAL VESSLES PREPARING TO VISIT COSTA RICA ON "GOODWILL MISSION" (CARACAS 9025)

VENEZUELAN REACTION TO NICARAGUAN SITUATION (CARACAS 9256)
CROWLEY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CARACA09274
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780400-0817
Format: TEL
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978097/aaaaafpt.tel
Line Count: 221
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3d89b350-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CARACAS 9024, 78 CARACAS 8758
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1445280
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THIS WEEK IN VENEZUELA
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, ECON, VE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3d89b350-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014